President To Appear More Often

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When the House Judiciary Committee cranks up its impeachment hearings early next month, President Nixon will be taking his own race to the public.

Buoyed by a hearty reception for the President in Jackson, Miss., on Thursday, the White House confirmed yesterday additional public appearance are scheduled in the West in the coming weeks.

Next Friday, Mr. Nixon will fly to Phoenix for a coliseum rally sponsored by the Arizona state Republican committee to demonstrate popular support for the embattled Chief Executive. Sen. Barry M. Goldwater (R-Ariz.) will introduce him. The appearance is partisan enough in character that the Republican National Committee has agreed to pick up the tab for the President's travel, according to the White House.

The following day, Mr. Nixon will fly on to Spokane, Wash., to open that city's international exposition, Expo 74. That speaking date has caused some grumbling among the White House press because it conflicts with the annual banquet of the White House Correspondents Association on the evening of May 4.

The regular reporters will have to choose between covering Mr. Nixon in the West or going to the dinner because the presidential party isn't expected to arrive back in Washington until late that Saturday night.

A week later on May 11, Mr. Nixon is scheduled to address the commencement exercises at Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Okla.

Deputy press secretary Gerald L. Warren said the travel plans are routine presidential appearances, without any particular significance. But another White House official, close to the anti-impeachment strategy, characterized them as a straightforward effort to build a better rating with the public.

"We went up 5 per cent in the Harris Poll," the presidential aide said, "so I think you can assume that we'll stay public. There's no question that the more he's out in public, the better off he is."

The improved standing in the Harris Survey — which showed the President's job rating climbing from 26 per cent to 31 per cent — was reported in early April, based on surveying done before the final reports on Mr. Nixon's income-tax troubles.

The same poll found, for the first time, that a slight plurality — 43 to 41 per cent — favors impeachment, the improved job rating notwithstanding.